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DE RUEHWL #0867/01 3530229
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 190229Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4967
INFO RUEHNZ/AMCONSUL AUCKLAND 1574
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 5055
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY 0618

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 000867

SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR H - DRICH AND TLONON AND EAP/ANP

E.O. 12985: N/A

TAGS: OTRA NZ

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR CODEL BAIRD AND
DELEGATION

REF: STATE 168126

¶1. (SBU) Embassy welcomes and grants country clearance to CODEL
Baird and delegation to travel to Christchurch, New Zealand from
December 31 - January 5, 2007. The purpose of this visit is to
examine research programs on the Antarctic Continent and examine
oceanographic, marine science, and climate and energy research being
conducted in New Zealand.

¶2. (SBU) Embassy control officer is General Services Officer Andrea
Gastaldo. Contact details are as follows:

Office: 644-462-6046
Fax: 644-462-6044
Cell: 027-230-7074
E-mail: gastaldoa@state.gov

Embassy administrative point of contact is Mary Lou Forrest.
Contact details are as follows:

Office: 644-462-6181
Fax: 644-472-3478
Cell: 027-449-6973
E-mail: forrestml@state.gov

¶3. a. (SBU) Hotel accommodations have been made at Crowne Plaza
Christchurch (www.crowneplaza.co.nz) located at Kilmore and Durham
Streets. Telephone number is 64-3-365-7799 and fax number is
64-3-365-0082. Room rate is NZ\$285.00 per room per night which
includes continental breakfast and goods and services tax of 12.5%
(US\$224.00 approx). Room charges will be charged back against CODEL
fund cite for nights of Dec 31, Jan 1 and 4 for Delegation members
and staff traveling to Antarctica. Room nights for Jan 2 and 3, for
accompanying spouse will be at members personal expense, along with
room incidentals.

b. (SBU) Transportation has been arranged for arrival, meetings and
departures.

c. (SBU) As Embassy cannot provide cashier services, the delegation
will receive their M&IE before they leave Washington and the
delegation will authorize the Embassy to chargeback the cost of the
hotel rooms to the fund cite.

¶4. (U) Travelers can exchange currency at the airport upon arrival
and ATM machines are readily available throughout New Zealand.

¶5. (SBU) Biosecurity Fines:

The Government of New Zealand instituted fines for non-declared
biosecurity hazards on travelers entering New Zealand with
undeclared plant, animal or food material. Travelers found carrying

these undeclared items will be immediately fined NZD \$200.00 (USD \$150.00). Biosecurity is a serious issue in New Zealand and fines will be administered immediately and without warnings.

16. (SBU) Security Information:

a. (SBU) All U.S. citizen personnel serving under the Chief of Mission authority in a temporary status of 30 days or more must complete appropriate overseas personal security training prior to travel (04 State 66580). Employees who have completed the Security Overseas Seminar course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) after June 1, 2000, meet this requirement. All other TDY personnel must either (1) complete the approved seminar at FSI entitled "Serving Abroad for Families and Employees" (SAFE), or (2) have their agency certify to the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security that the employee has undergone equivalent security training. The contact for this training is Assistant Director for Training at (703) 205-2617. Country clearance will not be granted for any traveler with planned TDY in excess of 30 days if this information is not stated/certified. POC for additional information is RSO Wellington.

b. (SBU) The U.S. Mission in New Zealand currently rates the threat from transnational and domestic terrorism as low. There are no terrorist groups or support groups believed to be operating in New Zealand at this time. In light of the worldwide security alert all visitors should heighten their security awareness and report any unusual incidents to the Regional Security Officer.

c. (SBU) Anonymous telephonic threats and obscure threat mail have occasionally targeted U.S. diplomatic missions in New Zealand. In response to U.S. policies and actions, various groups in New Zealand have demonstrated occasionally at the Embassy in Wellington and at the Consulate in Auckland. These demonstrations are usually small

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and are peacefully conducted. During these demonstrations, the host country police and protective services normally provide adequate protection to the Embassy and Consulate.

d. (SBU) New Zealand is considered a medium threat crime environment. As such, Wellington and Auckland have experienced an increase in violent and petty crimes, but they are usually non-confrontational in nature. However, home invasion robberies and assaults, once very rare, are becoming more frequent. Burglaries and thefts occur countrywide but primarily in the large cities of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington, and visitors should be especially aware that street crime, such as scams and pickpockets, is a daily occurrence in these cities. Common sense precautions should be taken, especially at night, to avoid becoming a target of opportunity.

e. (SBU) Generally, New Zealand does not play a significant role in the world drug situation; however, evidence indicates that New Zealand has been utilized as a transit point for shipments of Ecstasy, Heroin and Cocaine to Australia. The most abused drugs in New Zealand are locally produced methamphetamine and cannabis. There have been increased amounts of lab seizures and violent crime associated with groups attempting to control this market. Due to the increase of methamphetamine use in New Zealand there has been an increase in crimes of opportunity (i.e breaking into houses and vehicles).

f. (U) All forms of public transportation are generally safe at all times of the day; however, at night visitors should use common sense precautions so as not to become a target of opportunity.

g. (U) The traffic situation in Auckland can be difficult with a moderate amount of congestion. Wellington and Christchurch traffic is significantly better; however, during rush hour moderate delays can be expected. Visitors are advised that traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road. Visitors are advised that traffic accidents are common and that it is safe to pull over so that police may take an accident report. However, visitors who experience hostility or anti-American sentiment should depart the scene immediately and notify the RSO.

h. (SBU) Travelers intending to bring and use any USG provided electronic or photographic equipment must contact the RSO prior to introducing that equipment into the Chancery. Personal electronic or photographic equipment is not permitted in the Chancery. Only in severely limited cases will a notebook or laptop computer be permitted to be used in the Chancery.

i. (U) Precautions should also be taken to not discuss sensitive or classified information outside secure environments or over unsecured and/or cellular telephones, and to securely safeguard classified or sensitive information at the Chancery and not at hotels or residences.

j. (U) Visitors should also be aware of the State Department's Consular Information sheet for New Zealand and the most recent Worldwide Caution Public Announcements, which are available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>

k. (U) In essence, visitors to New Zealand must exercise appropriate caution and be alert to their surroundings with regard to their personal security. Suspicious incidents/activities should be reported to RSO Wellington (Telephone (64)(4)462-6000, 24 hours/day).

Keegan